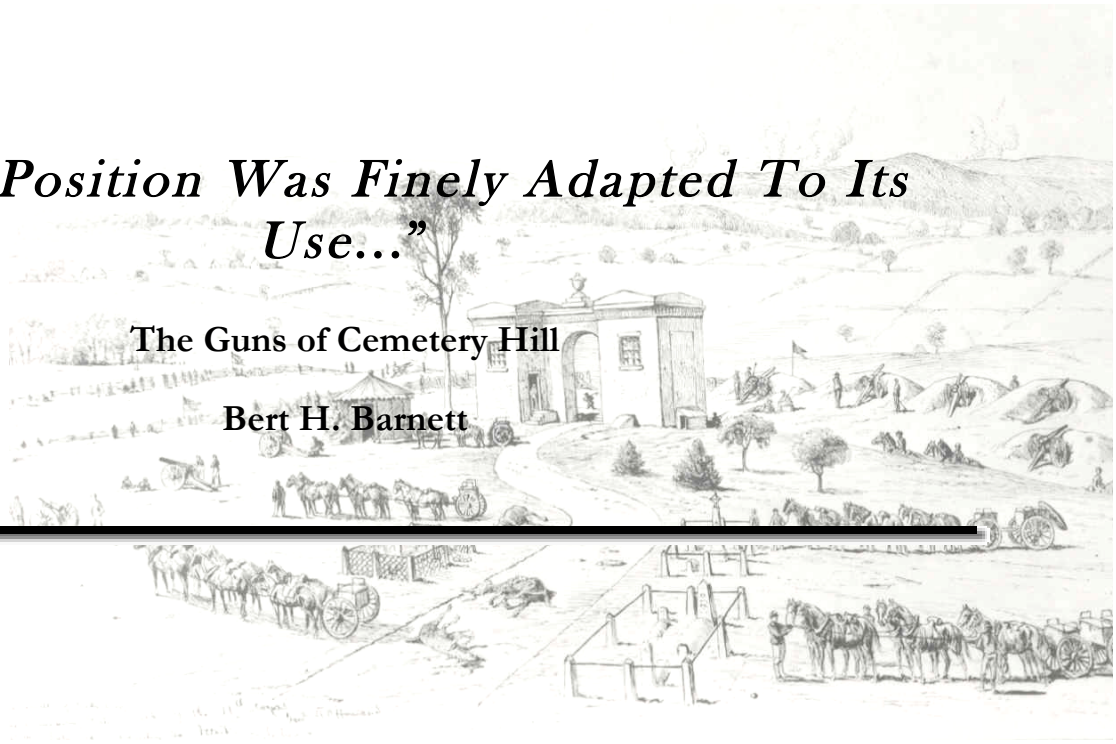
"...Our Position Was Finely Adapted To Its Use..."



The Guns of Cemetery Hill

Bert H. Barnett

During the late afternoon of July 1, 1863, retiring Federals of the battered 1st and 11th corps withdrew south through Gettysburg toward Cemetery Hill and began to steady themselves upon it. Following the difficult experiences of the first day of battle, many officers and men were looking to that solid piece of ground, seeking all available advantages. A number of factors made this location attractive. Chief among them was a broad, fairly flat crest that rose approximately eighty feet above the center of Gettysburg, which lay roughly three-quarters of a mile to the north. Cemetery Hill commanded the approaches to the town from the south, and the town in turn served as a defensive bulwark against organized attack from that quarter. To the west and southwest of the hill, gradually descending open slopes were capable of being swept by artillery fire. The easterly side of the hill was slightly lower in height than the primary crest. Extending north of the Baltimore pike, it possessed a steeper slope that overlooked low ground, cleared fields, and a small stream. Field guns placed on this position would also permit an effective defense. It was clear that this new position possessed outstanding features. General Oliver Otis Howard, commanding the Union 11th Corps, pronounced it "the only tenable position" for the army.[1]

As the shadows began to lengthen on July 1, it became apparent that Federal occupation of the hill was not going to be challenged in any significant manner this day. Even after General Robert E. Lee relented and decided to push forward with an all-out offensive, others on his staff had, for reasons that historians still debate, failed to act "with alacrity." In his 1906 address, Captain James Power Smith, General Richard Ewell's aide-de-camp, eloquently captured the inertia and the implications of the fatal hour that fell over the senior Confederate corps commander present that afternoon:

> About 5 P.M. I rode with General Ewell and staff into the town square of Gettysburg…As our corps commander sat in his saddle under the shade of a tree, a young officer brought from a cellar a bottle of wine, which the General

> pleasantly declined, while he chatted amiably with his men and the Federal prisoners gathered about him. *It was a moment of supreme importance to us, more evidently critical to us now than it would seem to anyone then*...Our corps commander, General Ewell, as true as a Confederate soldier as ever went into battle, was simply waiting for orders *when every moment of the time could not be balanced with gold* (emphasis added). [2]

The failure to actively pursue the Federals that afternoon had left them in command of the hill. However, a retreat from Cemetery Hill, *had the Unionists been sufficiently pressed*, had still been a real possibility. That withdrawal was still under consideration is evident in a communication from Major General Winfield Scott Hancock to General George G. Meade at 5:25 P.M.:

> We have now taken up a position in the cemetery, and cannot well be taken. *It is a position, however, easily turned.* Slocum is *now coming* on the ground, and is taking position on the right…But we have as yet, *no troops on the left,* the Third Corps *not having yet* reported…The battle is *quiet* now. I think we will be all right until night. I have sent all the trains back. When night comes, it can be told better what had best be done. *I think we can retire; if not, we can fight here*...(emphasis added).[3]

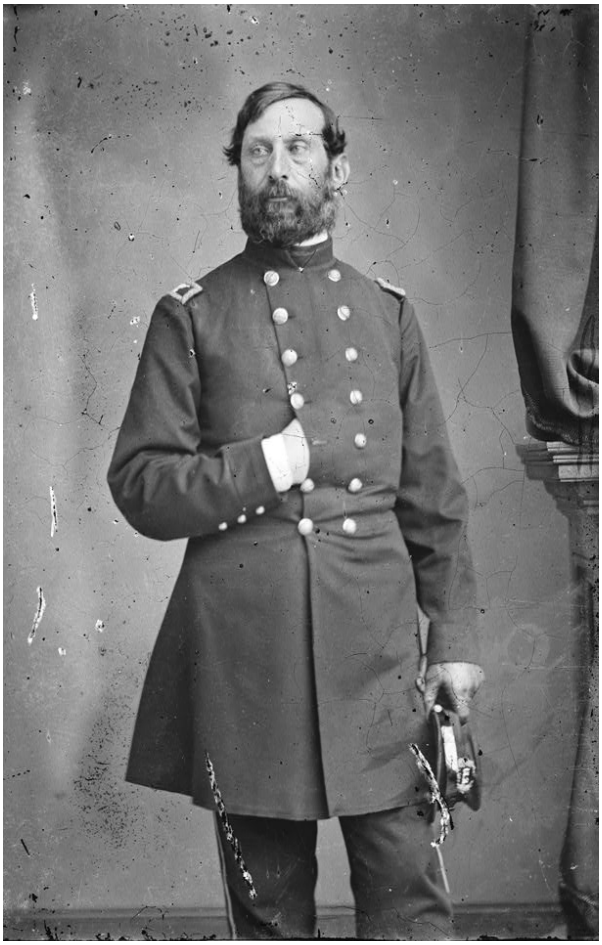
Ultimately, the Confederates simply ceded the position to the Federals through their inaction the afternoon of July 1. The Union defenders, determined to make the most of the opportunity they had been given, immediately consolidated their hold on the high ground and crowned the heights south of Gettysburg with the construction of defensive works. A significant component of these preparations involved the remaining artillery pieces of the 1st and 11th corps, placed so as to command the eastern, northern, and western approaches to the hills.

Those two corps had collectively brought to battle fifty-four artillery pieces. However, that number had been successively reduced by losses and captures throughout the day. At the conclusion of July 1, the number of effective field-pieces in those units had shrunk to forty-one. Further reducing the number of available guns, General James Wadsworth, commanding the 1st Division of the 1st Corps, had sensed a possible "back door" approach to the position from the Rock Creek Valley to the east. Fearing vulnerability there, the general requested a battery of six Napoleons, where it was posted on "[a] knoll to the right and rear of Cemetery Hill, [where it] opened on bodies of infantry crossing the fields to our right." Interspersed with the broken infantry elements of the two corps, the thirty-five remaining artillery pieces were yet deemed to represent enough collective defensive firepower until the arrival of reinforcements.[4]

Security, however, lay not merely in the presence of the artillery assets themselves, but in the confidence the men had in them and the officers who commanded them. It also reflected their latest experiences on the field interacting with them. July 1, 1863, had been a day of withdrawal, but it had been no Chancellorsville. The artillery arm had functioned smoothly – a testament to the effective reorganization following that searing debacle. The unceasing work of the Army of the Potomac's chief of artillery, Brigadier General Henry Jackson Hunt, had seen to that.

Forty-three years old, Hunt was a thoroughgoing professional who did not suffer fools gladly. Hunt had long seen the need for quality leadership and an enhanced artillery service. In his report after Chancellorsville, where there had been only five field officers of artillery in the army, Hunt had written scathingly of the failure of the Union army to maintain or promote a sufficient number of officers in the artillery. "It is not, therefore," he noted, "to be wondered at that confusion and mismanagement ensued." He continually pushed for improvements. Even after Gettysburg, Hunt did not relent on this point. He observed:

> Not only does the service suffer,…from the great deficiency of officers of rank, but a policy which closes the door of promotion to battery officers and places them and the arm itself under a ban, and degrades them in comparison with other arms of service, induces discontent, and has caused many of our best officers to seek positions, wherever they can find them, which will remove them from this branch of the service. We have lost many such officers, and…may lose many such more.[5]



Brig. Gen. Henry J. Hunt. LC

These were meritorious points. Indeed, some good Regular artillery officers, like John Gibbon, author of *The Artillerist's Manual*, had left that branch of the service to further their careers elsewhere. During the post-Chancellorsville reorganization, however, when each infantry corps received a grouping of artillery batteries (a "brigade" of artillery, usually led by a captain or a lieutenant, subject to the directions of the corps commander), Hunt was able to select the "best of the rest" from his pool of officers to command these new units.

To obtain positive results, Hunt had retained the excellent Colonel Charles S. Wainwright as chief of artillery for the 1st Corps. A wealthy and class-conscious New York farmer, Wainwright had seen European training and militia service in his thirty-seven years, and was quite the perfectionist in his chosen branch of service. Politically, he was a "McClellan man," a moderate Democrat and no friend of the Abolitionists.[6]

In the winter of 1861, Wainwright saw early service on examining boards, which were designed to remove incompetent officers. There he observed that being a good officer involved more than possessing a good background:

> We had one other case before us, that of Captain Bunting…a fine, military-looking man, evidently well-educated and of good social standing…He has been in command of a battery over four months, and most of the time of several, but did not know the first thing;…indeed, he at last admitted he had never studied the tactics, so his was a very short and decided case. It was astonishing to me that such a man should have taken a position where he must become known, and then not even try to fill it respectably… [7]

He quickly went from this to actual field command. On January 31, 1862, Wainwright was appointed chief of artillery for Brigadier General Joseph Hooker's division. During the Battle of Williamsburg, May 5, 1862, his emotional appeal to the men of Battery D, 1st New York Light Artillery, saved the abandoned guns of a Regular battery. The commander of Battery D, Captain

Thomas Ward Osborn, a former law student, also impressed Wainwright on this day. The two men had a slight disagreement about another temporarily abandoned fieldpiece:

> Osborn was slow (as I expected), but did capital service. He astonished me, when in the evening I told him to move to the rear, by replying in his drawling way, "Major, I shan't go until I get that gun out." The gun he spoke of was one that lay buried in the mud on the side of the road, just…where at the time rebel shot and shell were falling so fast, that I told him he might leave it till morning…He did get that gun, though with the loss of a man; and I learned that there was a good deal more grit in him than I thought…[8]

The grit displayed by Captain Osborn at Williamsburg was indicative of his leadership potential, and was one of the qualities that helped him to rise quickly as well. However, with the exception of a newfound leadership role in the artillery, Osborn had little in common with Wainwright. Politically, he leaned more toward the Republican and abolitionist positions, and would spend some time postwar in the Freedman's Bureau, as would his abolitionist commander at Gettysburg, General Howard. Osborn had no militia background, as prior to the loss at First Manassas he had "[taken] no interest in military affairs." Only after that debacle of Union arms had he considered entering a service he previously found "repulsive." He apparently grew comfortable with it over time, though, for on February 6, 1863, Osborn took command of a division of artillery in the 3rd Corps.[9]

His reputation as a successful commander continued to grow, and later withstood the major reorganization of the artillery that followed the debacle of Chancellorsville. As the Federal army constructed its "long arm" afresh, Osborn was plucked from his comfortable surroundings and made commander of the 11th Corps Artillery Brigade. Faced with the daunting challenge of rebuilding the shattered batteries of the 11th Corps artillery, Osborn wrote to his brother Spencer on June 11, grumbling at the difficulties opposing him:

> I am told I have been highly complimented in being assigned to this corps to reorganize its artillery, but to me it is an unpleasant job. I found the batteries in a most deplorable condition and in a state of complete demoralization. So far I have been…taxing my ingenuity to determine how best to make the batteries serviceable again…. I left the best artillery in the army when I left the Third Corps, and when I came here I took the worst. If we lie still two or three months, I can put it in good shape. If we move soon, I do not see how it can be done. The officers are willing, but…[a]ll their military habits are excessively loose. I will do my best to bring these batteries up to a good standard of efficiency.[10]

If the first day of the battle of Gettysburg was any indication, the artillery units of both the 1st and 11th corps had largely exhibited that "good standard of efficiency" so desired by Osborn. They had fought well, given the difficulties of terrain and numerical inferiority they had contended with.

The only artillery to be initially placed on East Cemetery Hill on July 1 had been the six rifles of Captain Michael Wiedrich's Battery I, 1st New York Artillery. Upon hearing from a staff-officer that General Carl Schurz had taken temporary command of the corps, and that General Howard was now acting commander on the field, he volunteered to move his battery to a location pre-selected by Howard. Later, during the fighting that afternoon, Howard approached the men and inquired of them, "Boys, I want you to hold this position at all hazards. Can you do it?" A chorus of cannoneers responded "Yes, sir!", which must have been heartening, as the remainder of the artillery, in both corps, had been dispersed to attempt to hold the advanced lines north and west of the town. This left Weidrich's battery the sole artillery force on the hills for a time, until

collapsing elements of the 1st and 11th corps could complete their withdrawal through the town. Attempting to strengthen the position and cover the larger area from two directions, the left section of two guns, commanded by Lt. Christopher Schmidt, was moved across the Baltimore pike to take a new position west of the cemetery, toward the northern head of Cemetery Ridge. The battery fought in this divided fashion for the remainder of the battle. It is unclear precisely when this was done, although Captain Weidrich later indicated it took place "shortly before the 1st and 11th Corps fell back." Whether done shortly before the main withdrawal from Seminary Hill, or rather "towards night," the combination of position and firepower of this single unit, divided or not, helped to deter further attacks on the 1st. It was enough to halt the advancing Confederates of Colonel Isaac E. Avery's brigade, as the Southerners experienced the results of "a battery upon [that] high, sloping spur on the mountain side immediately in our front," and the "very effective" shellfire from the guns located there.[11]

On the hill itself, order began to gradually emerge from fragmentation. With a little over an hour's worth of residual daylight left on July 1, and the remaining batteries of both corps now coalescing together, there was room for cautious optimism on the Federal side. Col. Wainwright later recorded that he felt "quite comfortable" with the new location, as most batteries of both corps were still largely intact, and he felt he could therefore "give them [the Confederates] a hot reception" if they charged the position. To expedite the command structure, the Baltimore pike was employed as an informal dividing line; units posted to the east of the pike were assigned to Col. Wainwright, (including those guns of Weidrich's New York 11th Corps Battery on East Cemetery Hill), while units posted to the west were assigned to Major Osborn's command, including Captain James A. Hall's 2nd Maine from the 1st Corps. This partition remained in force throughout the battle. Col. Wainwright, in his inimitable style, could not resist later noting that the guns of the 11th Corps, across the road in the cemetery "furnished a *support* for the batteries outside the gate" (emphasis added). Truthfully, however, the two artillery forces combined to provide support *for each other*, as well as helping to command an important sector of the field.[12]

On Cemetery Hill, however, Maj. Osborn busied himself organizing the batteries he presently possessed until reinforcements could arrive. On the afternoon of the 1st, he had dismissed the remnants of Captain Louis Heckman's Battery K, 1st Ohio, as being too shattered to participate further in battle. In their thirty minutes of fight on July 1, they had lost two of their four Napoleons. The major's decision denied him the use of the units' two remaining guns, when every one might later be required. Osborn needed more than guns at the moment, though – he needed to demonstrate leadership and inspire organization. His gunners had been through a rough fight on that first day, and with his batteries holding the crest of the hill, he did not want any commanders of dubious ability in his midst if it could be avoided. He had also inherited, for command purposes, the remnants of Captain Hall's 2nd Maine. Initially consisting of six 3-inch Ordnance rifles, only three of Hall's guns had survived in fighting trim at the conclusion of combat on July 1. By the following morning, however, Hall's battery again boasted four guns ready for service, having re-horsed a gun that had been shot up the day before. Hall's gunners would maintain their position on the left of the cemetery line for most of July 2. Given their collective experience of the previous day, when the battery had been horribly raked by a flanking fire of point-blank musketry, Osborn did not need to impress upon the men the value of the terrain they were holding.[13]

The surviving batteries of the 11th Corps Artillery Brigade likewise needed little reminder of the previous day's engagement. All had taken losses of varying degree, and all had fought solidly. Captain Hubert Dilger's Battery I, 1st Ohio, containing six Napoleon smoothbores at the outset of the first day's battle, had seen one of them disabled and out of action. Captain William Wheeler's 13th New York was down from four guns to three, having lost a 3-inch Ordnance rifle dismounted in the fields north of town. The Regulars of Battery C, 4th U.S. Artillery began the battle as a six-gun unit of Napoleons, led by First Lieutenant Bayard Wilkeson. Second Lieutenant Christopher F. Merkle had fought a section of the battery independently on July 1.

Following Wilkeson's mortal wounding and the units' withdrawal through town, Battery C was then shifted into half-batteries, with First Lieutenant Eugene A. Bancroft commanding the remainder. Bancroft assumed command of the entire battery when it reunited the next morning on Cemetery Hill.[14]

Across the Baltimore pike, Col. Wainwright was also taking stock and estimating what the following day might bring. Although he had not had to dismiss any remaining unit fragments out-of-hand, there had been definite losses. Battery B, 4th U. S, led by Second Lt. James Stewart, had suffered badly, and had lost the use of two of six Napoleons from damage to the carriages. Additionally, in Battery L, 1st New York Artillery, one Ordnance rifle had been captured. His full brigade firepower was therefore effectively reduced by three guns, before the addition of Weidrich's two sections on East Cemetery Hill. In total, Wainwright had twenty-three pieces under his command on the morning of July 2. [15]

In the very early morning hours of July 2, General Hunt, accompanied by General Meade, had ridden toward the left of the line, inspecting positions and terrain. For a portion of the ride, they were joined by Col. Wainwright, who endeavored to highlight, in the darkness, the locations and condition of his batteries to his superiors. This proving a somewhat fruitless task, the two senior officers did not tarry long, but continued their inspection.[16]

As the sun slowly rose, both artillery brigade commanders continued to focus on the day to come. Wainwright strengthened his batteries by having them entrench their positions on the hill. Also, throughout the morning, his guns occasionally "opened at times on small bodies of infantry passing our north front towards Culp's Hill." For his part, Major Osborn attended to the myriad details of his command. As had been done during the first day's battle, Osborn's caissons continued to supply the guns of his own command as well as those under Wainwright, "the train of the 1st Corps not being within reach." Osborn later reported this "necessity caused considerable annoyance" throughout the engagement.[17]

A sharp officer, Major Osborn also had a keen grasp of the potential offered by his location and was determined to exploit its defensive strength. This required the placement of more guns on the hill than were presently available; accordingly, he sought reinforcements from the Artillery Reserve. He later reported,

> I applied to General Hunt, chief of artillery Army of the Potomac, for a greater amount of artillery than we than had, as our position was finely adapted to its use, and I did not consider that we had sufficient to assist our small infantry force in holding the position if the enemy should attack us in heavy force.[18]

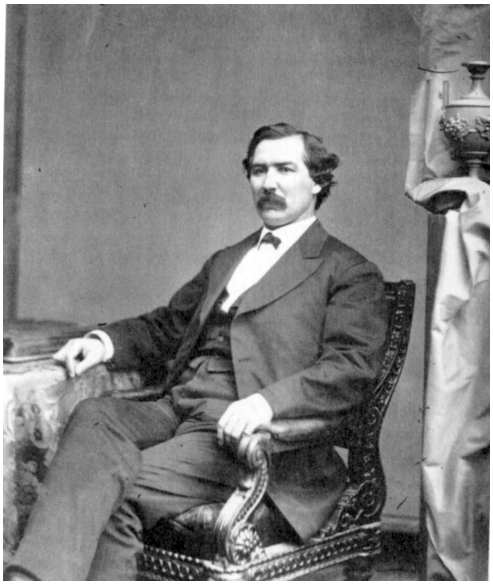
Although formally requested in the morning, batteries from the reserve would not appear on the hill *en masse* until later that afternoon. Consisting of five brigades of artillery, the reserve had been directed by General Meade to be brought forward early on the morning of July 2, for it was evident they would soon be needed. It is claimed the artillery reserve appeared in the area about 8 A.M., with "its heavy trains of ammunition," although reports suggest that it arrived sometime later. It took position "about the center of the field, between the Baltimore pike and the Taneytown Road…" The artillery reserve was therefore positioned relatively conveniently to Cemetery Hill.[19]

This new reserve system, adopted in the Federal artillery following the battle of Chancellorsville, had been constructed to provide for flexibility and the ability to rapidly mass artillery according to circumstances. Learning from bitter experience, it was insulated from the direct control of infantry officers, and was itself commanded directly by a single chief, Brigadier General Robert O. Tyler.

An appropriate blend of knowledge and experience for the position he now held, Tyler was the nephew of acknowledged artillery expert Daniel Tyler. From January of 1862, Robert Tyler's own service had been a combination of quartermaster and artillery assignments, which seemed

ever more to fit his talents. During General George B. McClellan's Peninsula campaign, he had been tasked with constantly moving heavy guns about while commanding the siege train. During this complex operation he had lost only one gun.[20]

The need for more firepower along the line had been noticed *and acted on* during the early morning hours; Maj. Osborn "placed three batteries [likely Bancroft's, Dilger's and Wheeler's] on the right of the Baltimore road, commanding the ravine between the two prominent hills on our right." According to Osborn's account in the May 31, 1879 issue of the *Philadelphia Weekly Times*, these guns were pulled south from Cemetery Hill, "with General Howard's permission," and separated into sections of two guns each, then placed into position. These guns formed a front roughly half a mile in length, from which gunners would be able to converge their fire upon any Confederate infantry attempting to advance through the Rock Creek Gap to the south. Although the six Napoleons of the 5th Maine Battery had been initially directed to cover the gorge on the afternoon of July 1, its presence alone was not now deemed sufficient. Consequently, a new priority, as seen first by Osborn and subsequently confirmed by Hunt, was to strengthen this vulnerable section of the Union line, which was still awaiting its full complement of General Slocum's infantry. Thus was born the "Baltimore pike artillery line." This line was not truly a "line" in the traditional military sense of the day, as it was expected to (and would) deliver concentrated firepower from discordant geographical points, ultimately bolstering Henry Hunt's views on the tactical uses of field artillery. However, given the limited number of guns available within the Army of the Potomac, guns acquired for one purpose might have to be denied for another. This was to have both positive and negative implications in the fight to come.[21]



Major Thomas Osborne. LC

Indeed, as the Federals remained themselves on the high, narrow hills, the concern about their position being turned appeared very real. During the morning hours, as both sides continued to extend their lines, Union commanders fretted about their defenses to the east of the hills. Guns were therefore urgently directed from a variety of sources, and "placed so as to command th[e] interval towards the Baltimore Pike," while "such of the batteries on Cemetery Hill as commanded the ground and its approaches from the side of the enemy were also placed in position." General Tyler ordered Captain Robert H. Fitzhugh, commanding the 4th Volunteer Brigade, to bring up two batteries, the six 3-inch Ordnance rifles of Fitzhugh's own Battery K of the 1st New York, along with the six 10-pounder Parrott rifles of Captain Augustin Parsons' Battery A, 1st New Jersey Artillery. These guns were extended down the eastern side of the ridge. Captain James H. Rigby, commanding the six 3-inch Ordnance rifles of Battery A of the Maryland Light Artillery, was directed to place his guns atop "a (Powers) hill about one mile south of Gettysburg and 500 yards west of the Baltimore turnpike," still in a position to defend a weakened 12th Corps line. The other two batteries of the brigade were sent south, to join Lt. Col. Freeman McGilvery. With the fixation over a potential morning attack through the Rock Creek Valley still uppermost in the minds of General Meade and General Hunt, no reserve guns were delivered to reinforce Cemetery Hill during those hours.[22]

However, a supporting artillery presence did appear elsewhere sometime in the mid-morning; the batteries of the 2nd Corps, dispersed in the following fashion: Facing to the west, and thus capable of helping to protect Cemetery Hill's southwestern slope, "in a (Zeigler's) grove" were

the six Napoleons of Lieutenant George Woodruff's Battery I, 1st U. S. Artillery. Additionally, the six 3-inch rifles of Battery A of the 1st Rhode Island Artillery were placed approximately "150 yards to the left" of that location. To their left rested six more Ordnance rifles, those of Lt. Alonzo Cushing's Battery A of the 4th U.S. Artillery. These were complemented by the six Napoleons of Lt. T. Fred Brown's Battery B, 1st Rhode Island Artillery, placed further to the south along the ridgeline. The remaining battery of Capt. John Hazard's 2nd Corps Brigade, Captain James M. Rorty's Battery B, 1st N.Y. Light, with four 10-pound Parrott rifles, was sent a considerable distance further south down Cemetery Ridge.[23]

The arrival of the 2nd Corps batteries, unlimbering along the quiet ridge, prior to the appearance of Osborn's Reserve guns, perhaps grated the temperamental major somewhat. *Where were his promised reinforcements for Cemetery Hill?* He had requested them early in the morning. It was now sometime around noon, and the 3rd Volunteer Brigade had yet not arrived. Osborn's northern and western faces were still more open than he would have cared for. Therefore, General Hunt strengthened Osborn's position with Lt. Chandler P. Eakin's Battery H, 1st U.S. Artillery, equipped with six Napoleons. Initially a part of the 1st Regular Brigade, Hunt detached it from that brigade "between 1 and 2 o'clock…and ordered to Cemetery Hill, where it was put into position." The battery was not destined to fight as an intact unit at Gettysburg, however – "late in the afternoon, one-half of the battery was ordered to a position below the hill…in rear of the Twelfth Corps and remained there…" to participate in covering that section of the Baltimore pike. The other three pieces, remaining in line on the cemetery crest, would later be joined by Capt. Elijah Taft's 5th Independent New York Battery from the 2nd Volunteer Artillery Brigade. This unit, boasting six 20-pounder long-range Parrott rifles, was ideally suited to exploit the gift of such a location, and to deal with the increasing circle of fire that such an exposed Federal position would inevitably begin to draw. On this day, the remainder of the batteries under Osborn's command that eventually reinforced the hill came from the 3rd Volunteer Brigade.[24]

Captain James F. Huntington, commander of the 3rd, recalled it was around 1 P.M. when his brigade, consisting of twenty-two guns split among four batteries, arrived in the area of Granite Schoolhouse Lane, halting in a field between the Baltimore turnpike and the Taneytown road. There they had lunch and "waited for orders." While the cannoneers ate, an artillery exchange was already underway between the Confederate guns along Seminary Ridge and the Federal batteries on the hill.[25]

Regarding this artillery duel, Confederate Artillery Chief William N. Pendleton stated:

> …[B]atteries of the Third Corps, from the advanced position in the center, early taken, occupied the attention of the enemy by a deliberate fire during the whole afternoon…It elicited a spirited reply, and was useful in preventing full concentration by the enemy on either flank.[26]

On the morning of July 2, the Confederate batteries of Major David G. McIntosh had moved up into position on Seminary Ridge, nearly opposite Cemetery Hill. However, the level of engagement from those units against the Federals posted there was dubious. McIntosh stated in his report that apart from receiving "a terrible artillery fire" at various times throughout the remainder of the battle, "[o]ur line remained quiet until a movement forward being made by 1st Corps, [at which point] a few rounds were fired by us to draw the enemy's attention, which [it] never failed to do..."[27]

In keeping with General Pendleton's expressed sentiments, diverting the full concentration of Federal resources was a key portion of the operations of July 2. While the initial and primary attacks were to be made against the Union left by General James Longstreet's corps, demonstrations were also to be made by Ewell against the opposite end of the line, and for these to be converted ultimately into a full-scale attack if the opportunity presented itself. To that end, portions of the Confederate artillery line amassed on Seminary Ridge were designated the

purpose of bombarding Cemetery Hill. This included a portion of Lane's battalion, primarily Captain John T. Wingfield's Battery C of the Sumter Georgia Artillery containing two 20-pounder Parrott guns and three 3-inch "Navy Parrott rifles," so-called for their breech-ring attachments – along with Capt. Hugh M. Ross's Battery A of the same unit, equipped with another such "Navy" Parrott, in addition to three standard 10-pounders, and a Napoleon. Capt. Ross' battery also contained another bronze piece – a shorter ranged 12-pound howitzer, which was detached from the battery and did not participate in the fighting at that point. These ten guns, in concert with the nine rifled pieces stripped from Lieutenant Colonel John J. Garnett's battalion, positioned a short distance south of the Fairfield road, under Major Charles Richardson, actively focused their fire on Cemetery Hill in the early afternoon.[28]

Major Osborn, on the receiving end of this fire, recalled being somewhat unimpressed by the Confederate fire from the west. He later noted:

> Most of the day the firing of the enemy's artillery was irregular, they scarcely opening more than one battery at a time, and when they did so we readily silenced them.

The perceived ineffectiveness of the early-afternoon bombardment of Cemetery Hill by the Confederates explained their failure to draw a serious reaction from the Federals. The only notable loss during the shelling in Osborn's command was Lt. Eakin, who was wounded in the hip and carried from the field. [29]

Symptomatic mechanical and organizational flaws did, in fact, plague the Southern artillery as a fighting force. The Southern custom of "mixed batteries," i.e., placing rifles and smoothbore guns together in the same battery, in contrast to a strict battery organization by gun *type,* unnecessarily diminished the effectiveness of the "long arm." This was particularly noticeable when a concentration of accurate fire at longer ranges was required. When called on to provide it, the standard Confederate tactic was to strip the rifled pieces from their batteries and form an impromptu unit for precision shelling. However, this often reduced the overall effective firepower by as much as one-half, and was somewhat detrimental to organizational integrity. Such had been the case with Lt. Col. Garnett's artillery battalion. Although the battalion numbered some fifteen guns, only the battalion's nine rifled pieces, in conjunction with others, whose batteries had also been individually reviewed for the task at hand, had been directed to fire against Cemetery Hill. They opened at approximately 3 P.M., "when the engagement became general."[30]

The Confederate artillerists of the 3rd Corps, however, were also assisted by three batteries, twelve rifles in all, under the command of Captain Willis J. Dance, positioned near the Lutheran Seminary, just north of the Fairfield road. These guns, a portion of General Ewell's 2nd Corps Reserve Artillery Battalion, began firing somewhere closer to 4 P.M., about the time firing would also begin to be noticed from the east, from Benner's Hill. While the nature of the fire from McIntosh's batteries was described as somewhat diversionary, Garnett and Dance's gunners continued shelling the hill "without cessation" until shortly before dusk.[31]

While Maj. Osborn claims that his batteries "readily silenced" the Confederate artillery pointed at Cemetery Hill during most of the day (a more charitable appraisal, perhaps, given the July 3 cannonade experience as a benchmark), his view was not shared by all. An impressive amount of iron had been placed in the air on July 2, *prior to* the Confederate bombardment from the east.

Infantry private Luther B. Mesnard, Co. D, of the 55th Ohio, recalled the spectacle of "Probably 30 to 50 guns on Cemetery Hill…firing over our heads…" during that time.
Likewise, George Perry Metcalf of the 136th New York, positioned on the western slope of Cemetery Hill, along the Taneytown road, recollected the shelling in dramatic terms:

> On the second day as we lay close to the stone fence between us and the enemy, our regimental colors…stuck up over the fence. This gave the enemy a point to shoot at; and suddenly some dozen or twenty cannon balls or shells came screeching down among us…The thing was repeated again and this time with better success, for the top of our flag was shot off about six feet from where I lay…Orders came to get out of that place and go further down the road.

Metcalf further related that while a number of casualties resulted from the Southern fire, he indicated that ultimately the shelling proved only an annoyance, for his unit "*did not move over 20 rods and again hugged the stone fence in front of the cemetery*" (emphasis added). An experienced 11th Corps Union officer later observed, "[T]hough the fire of a battery was much less deadly at a distance than musketry close at hand, men will get uneasy under a harmless shelling quicker than under a murderous fire of small arms." Although it might indeed have made some of the Union men on the hill "uneasy," the overall affect of the early-afternoon Confederate artillery fire against the hill was less than striking.[32]

Additionally, while by this point in the war the Confederate gunners were themselves now as experienced as their Union counterparts, their difficulties with ammunition, fuses, and powder further reduced the effectiveness of the Confederate artillery service. Colonel Edward Porter Alexander, artillery chief for Longstreet's 1st Corps, recalled the technical difficulties endured by Confederate cannoneers:

> [O]ur artillery ammunition was inferior, especially that of the rifles. The Confederacy did not have the facilities for much nice work of that sort, and we had to take what we could get without rigid inspection. How our rifled batteries always envied [the]…opposition their abundant supply of splendid ammunition! For an unreliable fuse or a rifle-shell which "tumbles" sickens not only the gunner but the whole battery, more than "misfires" at large game dishearten a sportsman. There is no encouragement to careful aiming when the ammunition fails, and the men feel handicapped.[33]

Even with its mechanical and organizational difficulties, however, Confederate artillery and its early afternoon bombardment did one definite thing, however: It underscored Major Osborn's early-morning request for more guns on Cemetery Hill.

Toward that end, the batteries of the 3rd Reserve Brigade finally began to move into position on the hill somewhere between 3 and 3:30 P.M. Major Osborn, fully alive to the exposed nature of the position he was charged with defending, took pains to see that the artillery available to him properly utilized the available terrain as it arrived. Aware that the afternoon's bombardment possibly signaled the beginning of further offensive operations against his position, Osborn situated the batteries by type to maximize the potential from each gun on the hill. He arranged the smoothbore batteries in the center of Cemetery Hill, where their larger bores covered the shorter approaches toward the town. These he aimed directly at the base of the hill. The rifled batteries, posted on either side of the Napoleons, covered the longer open distances more from the west and northeast.

With the belated addition of Huntington's guns, the artillery position on the hill was materially strengthened. Osborn's deployment, in its "perfected" form, ran across the northwest face of Cemetery Hill, initially perpendicular to the Baltimore pike. Closest to it, and extending into the cemetery grounds, were the five Napoleons of Captain Hubert Dilger's Battery I, 1st Ohio Light Artillery. To their left, returning around 4:30 P.M. from a position along the Baltimore pike line, were six more smoothbores of Lieutenant Eugene Bancroft's 4th U.S., Battery G. Upon their belated arrival, the right and center sections of this battery focused their fire toward the east, while the left section engaged units to the north. Next in line sat the first of Osborn's

reinforcements from Gen. Hunt, Lt. Eakin's 1st U.S., Battery H. Their Napoleons also directly commanded the town. As the crest of the hill bent back, roughly parallel with the Taneytown road below, the line continued with the three remaining Ordnance rifles of Lt. William Wheeler's 13th New York. Positioned adjacent to the left of Wheeler's guns, for a short time, were the six 3-inch Ordnance rifles of Captain Frederick Edgell's 1st New Hampshire Battery. During the early portion of the afternoon they had participated in counter-battery fire against the Confederate guns near the Chambersburg pike, but the New Hampshiremen later departed to cover a possible retreat of Federal troops from Culp's Hill. To their left was located Captain Wallace Hill's Battery C of the 1st West Virginia, with four 10-pounder Parrott rifles. The southern end of Maj. Osborn's line was marked by Captain Hall's four surviving 3-inch Ordnance rifles from the 2nd Maine, perched on a piece of high ground, overlooking the Taneytown road.[34]

Completing the armament of Cemetery Hill proper with big guns were twelve more artillery pieces. Two of Capt. Taft's 20-pounders of the 5th New York were placed fairly close to the Baltimore pike, facing to the northwest, where they could aid in suppressing the fire coming in from the seminary area. The other four long-range Parrotts were placed at a right angle to the other two, roughly in the area behind Lieut. Bancroft's Napoleons. The six 3-inch Ordnance rifles of Lieutenant George W. Norton's 1st Ohio, Battery H, better known as "Huntington's," rested slightly to the right and rear of the New Yorkers. At its busiest, Osborn's command saw a total of forty-six artillery pieces gathered on Cemetery Hill during the afternoon of July 2 as threats began to intensify against it. Given that the Federals had assumed a defensive position, with the hill a prime target from three directions, its tactical artillery defense was now taking shape. Osborn, now confident of his dispositions, later recollected:

> By [my] assignment of artillery, I commanded with a reputable number of guns every point on which the enemy could place artillery commanding Cemetery Hill. I also occupied every point of the hill available for artillery, and during the engagement every gun, at different times, was used with good effect, and the fire of no one gun interfered with the fire of another.[35]

Major Osborn's east-facing batteries were, from their position on the hill, able to throw projectiles across the Baltimore pike and into the low ground north of Culp's Hill and toward the likely Confederate artillery position of Benner's Hill, a rather dominating elongated formation that stood out to the northeast roughly five-eighths of a mile distant. Although slightly shorter than East Cemetery Hill, Benner's Hill itself rose nearly one hundred feet above the surrounding landscape. It was not an ideal location, to be sure, as the limited length and forward slope of its crest would place any Confederate artillery at an immediate disadvantage against the Federal guns on the slightly higher ground. However, if a Confederate infantry attack were to be launched against Cemetery Hill by the infantry of General Edward Johnson's division *and properly supported by artillery* then the Confederate guns of nineteen year-old Major Joseph W. Latimer's battalion would need to be placed at that location to provide it. Against that threat, the big guns of Taft's battery would be quite effective in the role of counterbattery fire, as the large Parrotts were capable of accurately throwing heavier shells a longer distance than a standard fieldpiece.[36]

Of course, the very necessity of accepting inferior positions directly in the sights of Federal gun emplacements indicated the degree to which the Confederates had now become hopelessly committed to the offensive. Much of this had at its genesis the meeting held between the commanding general and the primary officers in the 2nd Corps. In the gathering twilight of July 1, General Robert E. Lee had heard the deepening litany of justifications regarding the Confederate failure to pursue the Federals beyond Cemetery Hill. Though Lee had initially desired to shift Ewell around "to my right," rather than have him remain where he was (especially after hearing

from Ewell's available division commanders that an attack against Cemetery Hill on the morning of July 2 would be difficult, doubtful, and expensive), Ewell had impressed his commander (and retained his location) by riding over to his commander's headquarters later that night when more (faulty) information later indicated that Culp's Hill could be occupied by incoming Confederate forces. By the time the truth was known, though, Federal troops had moved from Cemetery Hill to Culp's, and taken position there also. The management of the entire scenario, as planned from the Southern perspective, had spun out of control. Thus, another Confederate attack, *up hill in the face of enemy artillery,* was now required. Timely co-ordination, the bane of Confederate operations between combat arms during the Gettysburg campaign, would be vital.[37]

The young Maj. Latimer was a sharp officer, seen by some as a prodigy. This day, he was very much aware of the difficulties facing him. His initial survey of the ground, performed near daylight on the morning of July 2, plainly revealed the vulnerabilities of his situation. A cadet at the Virginia Military Institute at the outbreak of hostilities, Latimer had rapidly risen through the ranks to receive a commission. By the summer of 1862 he had been made captain of the Courtney Virginia Artillery. By the following March, he had received a further promotion to major. In active command of the battalion for only a short time following the wounding of Lieutenant Colonel R. Snowden Andrews at Stephenson's Depot in mid-June, he was referred to by General Ewell as "Young Napoleon," and by others as "The Boy Major." While noting the hill appeared to be the only useable artillery platform on that portion of the field, Latimer no doubt observed that it made no sense to occupy it precipitately and prematurely expose his artillery force to the looming Federal threat on East Cemetery Hill. He thus kept his batteries concealed near the eastern slope of Benner's Hill until the last possible moment.[38]

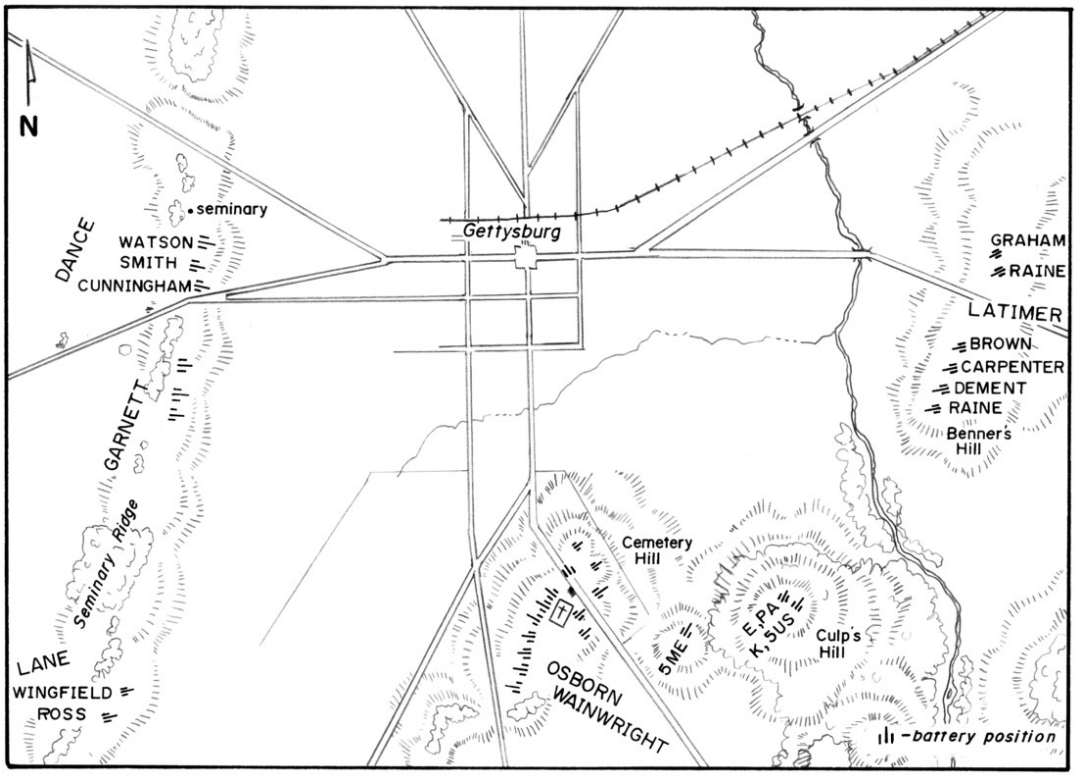
The order and placement of the Confederate batteries on the hill, when they did deploy, took this pattern: Captain Charles I. Raine, commanding the Lee Battery of Virginia, occupied the extreme left or southern portion of the hill with one section containing one 10-pounder Parrott and one 3-inch Ordnance rifle. Just to their right on the exposed ridge were the four Napoleons of the 1st Maryland Artillery, commanded by Captain Charles Dement. The Alleghany Battery of Virginia, led by Captain John C. Carpenter, followed with two 3-inch Ordnance rifles and a smoothbore section of two Napoleons. The last of Latimer's units, the Chesapeake (Maryland) Artillery, deployed just south of the Hanover road with its four 10-pounder Parrott rifles, directed by Captain William D. Brown. In support of Latimer's battalion, the four 20-pounder Parrott rifles of Captain Archibald Graham's 1st Rockbridge Artillery were located some distance to the north of the Hanover road. These guns were on loan from Capt. Dance's Reserve Battalion, and had relocated in the morning hours of July 2. When Latimer's guns arrived in the area, they passed in front of the Rockbridge Battery, and the two 20-pounder Parrott rifles of the Lee Battery remained in position with Graham's. From this location, these heavier pieces formed a separate grouping designed to pound the Federal guns. The remainder of Latimer's battalion sought dubious cover until the moment they were needed.[39]

In attempting to shield his battalion from the massed Federal firepower in his front, Maj. Latimer had been tactically judicious. However, he could not fail to avoid exposing his men and guns to an inevitably heavy fire once they moved onto the open plain and began firing toward the enemy. According to Pvt. John William Ford Hatton, of Dement's Maryland Battery,

> At 4 o'clock P.M. our Battery advance[d] to the line of battle and rolled our guns in position on a hill about two miles east of Gettysburg. Our whole artillery battalion opened fire as fast as the guns could be gotten in position, and a storm of shell greeted us the moment our first gun fired. It seemed that the enemy had gotten range of the hill even before we fired.[40]

Latimer had advanced into a trap. Although Col. Wainwright fired into Latimer's position "with thirteen three-inch guns," plus an occasional shell launched from the left section of

Greenleaf T. Stevens' 5th Maine battery, the full total of Federal guns engaged against him, from all practical locations, may well have exceeded something closer to twenty-six, as a number of other units, portions of the "Baltimore pike line," also concentrated their fire on the vulnerable Confederate batteries. Included in this list were Rigby's six 3-inch Ordnance rifles and the Napoleons of Stevens' batteries, previously mentioned. These were bolstered by the addition of Lieutenant William Van Reed's section of Napoleons from Lt. David Kinzie's 5th U. S., Battery



Union and Confederate Gun positions late afternoon on July 2.

K, lately relocated to the crest of Culp's Hill. Positioned with the smoothbores was one 10-pounder Parrott rifle of Lieutenant Charles Atwell's Pennsylvania Light Independent (Knap's) Battery E. Some ninety minutes thereafter, it was joined by two other Parrott rifles of Knap's Battery, for a total of five guns at that location. Commanded by Lieutenant Edward R.Geary, son of 12th Corps commander General John Geary, this composite battery would effectively play its part in helping to deliver a devastating cross-fire against the Confederate artillerists.[41]

Back on East Cemetery Hill, the gunners under Col. Wainwright's command contained at this time four volunteer batteries, and one unit of Regulars. Lieutenant James Stewart's 4th U.S., with its four surviving Napoleons, was placed just to the east of the Baltimore pike, facing down into the town. Essentially, they extended Maj. Osborn's gun line across the upper crest of Cemetery Hill. A short distance from Stewart's right, and perpendicular to it, was a line of three batteries of 3-inch Ordnance rifles, facing to the east. On the northernmost portion of this line, two sections of Captain Michael Wiedrich's Battery I, 1st New York looked out over the northern end of this line. To the right of Wiedrich were the four 3-inch rifles of Battery B, 1st Pennsylvania, under the command of Captain James Cooper. The undulating ground, sloping away from the forward and the right of Cooper's guns, was occupied by the five rifles of Batteries E /L (consolidated), also

of the 1st New York Artillery Regiment. Known as "Reynolds'," this unit was under the temporary command of Lieutenant George Breck following the fluke wounding of the captain in the eye on July 1.

During the relative calm of the morning hours, Wainwright's cannoneers had constructed works around their pieces for additional protection against incoming fire. It was to prove a prudent, though insufficient, move. When the time came for the Confederates to assail the Union positions, the Federal batteries would clearly be visible. This vulnerability, however, was to be more than offset during the artillery bombardment phase by the height advantage afforded by East Cemetery Hill over Benner's Hill. Additionally, since the Federal crews had been firing during the morning hours, Wainwright's gunners had a good knowledge of ranges and distances for the various key features in their respective fronts.[42]

Of the vulnerabilities that afflicted the Union artillerists on the hills, one of the most dangerous was enemy sharpshooters. A number of snipers took up position in various locations, focusing on the exposed cannoneers. One of their bases was a brick house just outside the cemetery gate. They practiced their skills from its windows and openings prior to the bombardment. In the early afternoon, one such rifleman severely wounded Captain Stevens of the 5th Maine. Hit in both legs below the knee with a single shot, he was replaced by Lieutenant Edward N. "Ned" Whittier. In Wiedrich's battery, at the top of East Cemetery Hill, several of the men and lieutenants Nicholas Sahm and Christian Stock were wounded. A number of horses were also killed. In response, General Howard requested that Major Osborn clear the snipers' nest with a few artillery rounds, which was enthusiastically done. The gunner of the third piece of Wiedrich's battery turned his gun toward a steeple in town, allegedly against orders, to remove a pesky sniper there.[43]

On East Cemetery Hill, Col. Wainwright took note of the precision of the Confederate artillery when it deployed on Benner's Hill: "Their fire was the most accurate I have ever seen for their artillery, and the distance was just right, say 1,400 yards." Though he misjudged the relative heights of the two hills, presuming the Confederate position to be the higher of the two, he observed the progress of his own guns in reply:

> Cooper's and Reynolds' batteries fired beautifully…Weidrich, on the contrary, made wretched work of it: his Germans were all excitement and stood well but were utterly ignorant as to ranges, and the old man knew little more himself. I had to go to each piece myself, set their pendulum hausse, and show them just what length of fuze to use. I found one piece firing 15-second fuzes at 5 degrees of elevation, while another was using 18-second fuzes at 4 degrees of elevation.[44]

While Wainwright was certainly not shy about expressing his prejudices, on July 2 such invidious criticisms had on occasion little merit. For while it was true that the men of the "Buffalo Battery" had embarrassed themselves with their guns on July 1, it was not from their *failure* to accurately hit targets at long range, but rather from their ability to precisely hit the *wrong one*. The men of the 17th Pennsylvania Cavalry, having tasted Wiedrich's "friendly fire" from the cemetery on the previous day, could attest to that. July 2, however, was different, and the battery did its part creditably to reduce Confederate fortunes.

In preparation for the assault against Culp's Hill, Confederate General Albert Gallatin Jenkins had been ordered to take his brigade of some 1,300 men to Gen. Edward Johnson's extreme left, thus freeing the two brigades of General John B. Gordon and William "Extra Billy" Smith to participate in the forthcoming attack. As Jenkins rode out along Old Harrisburg Road north of town to reconnoiter his position around noon on July 2, he and his small staff were seen by gunners on East Cemetery Hill – most likely the "utterly ignorant" Germans of Wainwright's commentary. Seeing such a target standing in the open fields below them, the batterymen promptly responded. With a few quick shots, General Jenkins was permanently distracted from his journey, badly wounded by a shell. As a result, the planned relief of the Confederate infantry

designed to strengthen General Ewell's force did not take place as intended. As a result of a few well-placed shots from East Cemetery Hill, the Confederates would ultimately be denied the use of roughly 20 percent of their potential available troop strength for the evening attacks against Culp's Hill.[45]

Col. Wainwright, unaware of what had transpired north of town, had nonetheless been quick to condemn the German gunners temporarily assigned to his command. Later, however, he would gain another opportunity to reflect, with different results, as the fire heated up around his positions. For the moment, he merely surveyed his gun line as the fire from the Confederates increased.

Early in the bombardment of Latimer's battalion, the gunners of Captain James H. Cooper's 1st Pennsylvania Battery succeeded in striking a Confederate caisson, detonating the three ammunition boxes. In response, the regulars of Stewart's Battery B, working nearby, gave a cheer only to immediately thereafter lose one of their own caissons in similar fashion. Captain Stewart remembered:

> Then the hurrah was on the side of the Johnnies. It was the cleanest job I ever saw. The three chests were sent skyward, and the horses started off on a run towards the town, but one of the swing team got over the traces, throwing him down and halting the team.[46]

The cross-valley caisson-killing contest attracted the attention of the heavier Confederate pieces as well. By this time, the six 20-pounder Parrotts north of the Hanover road were also focusing in on the guns on the ridgeline. Col. Wainwright witnessed,

> [A] shot [that] struck in the center of a line of a line of infantry who were lying down behind the wall. Taking the line lengthways, it literally ploughed up two or three yards of men, killing and wounding a dozen or more. Fortunately it did not burst…[47]

Lieutenant Edward Geary, commanding the five pieces on Culp's Hill, experienced a similar circumstance. On July 17 he wrote to his mother,

> I made one very narrow escape from a shell. One of the gunners, who saw the flash of one of the rebel guns, hallowed to me to "look out, one's coming," and I had just enough time to get behind a tree before the shell exploded within a foot of where I had been standing.[48]

The Confederates, however, did not get their shots off with impunity. Lt. Geary recounted that he was successful, "with a section of brass guns," in "disabling a battery at some 800 yards distance, by dismounting one piece, blowing up two enemy caissons and killing approximately twenty-five horses."[49]

The Federal artillery available for use against the Confederate guns on Benner's Hill was substantial. Though it appeared that the Confederates had perhaps been prepared to catch the Federals in a deadly crossfire from two directions, technical Union artillery supremacy, coupled with the active command leadership of Henry Hunt, permitted the Federal artillerists to reverse the situation. As General Hunt noted of the "Baltimore pike line," "The interval between the lines was too broken and too heavily wooded to permit the artillery to be placed on the immediate line of battle."[50]

Hunt's willingness to disperse his artillery to offset the challenges posed by the difficult terrain only strengthened its defensive value. The gun positions that commanded this critical roadway were located on the higher elevations of Culp's Hill, Cemetery Hill, and to the south, on both

sides of the pike, on Power's and McAllister's hills, where they posed a potential crossfire threat to any advancing Confederate forces. East Cemetery and Cemetery hills were well-covered by a tightly woven web of interlocking fire supports. For now, it would simply be a duel between the big guns and the men who operated them. It was not shaping up to be a good afternoon for Latimer's cannoneers, and it would grow more difficult as the afternoon lengthened.

At the opening of the bombardment, Captain William D. Brown of the 4th Maryland Battery had moved to the head of his unit to give a traditional, pre-battle inspirational oration to the cannoneers. For his efforts, he had been rewarded with a solid projectile that hit him in the leg, prior to touring his horse. Later, as he lay on a stretcher, he told another Marylander, "… if you should get home, tell my poor father I died endeavoring to do my duty." He then observed, "We are making out very badly up there." His observation was proving prophetic.[51]

The Confederate batteries on the open slope of Benner's Hill were now exposed to heavy and repetitive counterbattery fire from the guns on their front and their flank. A gunner with the 1st Maryland Battery remembered,

> Men were struck, wounded and killed, while their comrades continued at their duties, regardless of the cries of agony and the moans of the dying. Our guns were served as fast as could be with shot and shell.[52]

After some time of this rapid-fire bombardment, both sides took a slight reprieve. The Federals most likely employed the time in the same manner as their Confederate counterparts, securing ammunition, removing damaged materiel, and making personnel changes. On the Confederate side, there was much to repair. Two caissons had been wrecked by this point – one by direct fire, one by the careless operation of Corporal Samuel Thompson, whose enthusiasm for the presumed Confederate victory led him to be inattentive to basic safety procedures. Fixing fuses to shells at an ammunition wagon, Sam failed to heed several warnings regarding the danger of exposing ammunition to the incessant nearby shell bursts. When one finally came too close, the resultant explosion gave him a personal victory of sorts, but it cost the Confederates a caisson.[53]

When the dispute was renewed, following a short respite, the determination of the Confederates to continue the contest was clearly signaled: The fourteen guns "fired by battalion" as one, against the Federal artillery on the ridgeline. One Southern gunner recalled the effect and the result of that tactic:

> …[T]he ground upon which we stood trembled from the jar. So promptly did the enemy reply that it seemed as though they caused our own shell[s] [to] rebound against us, after the manner of a boomerang, after leaving the muzzles of our guns, but a step or so….Doubtless, they were watching our demonstrations, and fired at seeing the flash of our guns before our balls reached them. The missiles of death and destruction passed one another in the air on their speedy and unerring mission.[54]

Back on Col. Wainwright's gun line, a "speedy and unerring" shell from one of the 20-pounder Parrotts found its mark in Cooper's battery, exploding directly underneath gun number three. Private Peter G. Hoagland was killed outright, and Private James Mcleary was mortally wounded. Three others, Corporal Joseph Reed, Private Jesse Temple, and Private Daniel W. Taylor, were all wounded as well from this single shell.[55]

Col. Wainwright, who had previously been dismayed by what he had seen as "the utter unmilitariness" of Cooper's battery, now forgave it as he witnessed five other batterymen immediately step forward, take their places over their wounded fellows, and discharge the piece without a murmur. While a tragic moment, Wainwright noted that he "was very proud" of how

the gunners behaved on this occasion. The mortally wounded man, Pvt. Mcleary, was taken across the road to the well by the cemetery gate-house. According to Wainwright's recollections, the battery's bugler, supposedly Mcleary's brother and idle at the moment, approached Capt. Cooper for permission to visit him as he lay dying. Capt. Cooper, in turn, asked Wainwright. "Yet were they in camp," the Colonel recorded, "hardly a man in the battery would but would go off for all day without permission to see a well brother, and Cooper would think it all right." With a new crew around it, gun three resumed the fight. A short period thereafter, gun number two was struck by a shell and had its axle broken, but the gun continued to function, the crew working the piece "until the gun carriage broke down" shortly before the close of the contest.[56]

Most of the Confederate fire was concentrated on the rifled guns on East Cemetery Hill. The six Napoleons of the 5th Maine, perched on a knoll just north of Culp's Hill, were somewhat less advantageously posted for direct counterbattery fire than the remainder of Col. Wainwright's pieces. Lt. Whittier, while perhaps not the best recollector of time that afternoon, was impressed by the "unobstructed view" the batteries on the hill had as they faced the Confederate guns, and how they exploited it.

> At once, as if directed by the command of one man, our battery, united with Battery L, 1st New York, Lieutenant Breck, with Cooper and Wiedrich on the hill and with Taft's 20-pounders in the cemetery, and poured such destructive fire into the batteries on Benner's Hill that in less than half an hour four of their limbers or caissons exploded and their batteries were silenced. Nowhere on the field of Gettysburg was such havoc wrought by artillery on artillery…

Employing the fire of his left section against Latimer's batteries in conjunction with the others, Lt. Whittier recalled, "Our guns grew so hot," he later wrote, "in spite of using wet sponges, that it was quite an hour afterwards before one could bear his hand on the knob of the cascabel." Irrespective of the apparent ferocity of Battery E's individual efforts, Whittier "doubt[ed] if more than six or eight projectiles came to the ground on the knoll where we had been ordered by General Hancock." Although not directly in the thickest of the fight, one casualty in the battery was particularly noteworthy; a bursting shell wounded cannoneer John F. Chase more than forty times.[57]

As the fire of the Confederate batteries wore on, General Hunt, who had inspected the area, determined to strengthen Col. Wainwright's line with the last battery of Huntington's 3rd Volunteer Reserve Brigade. Captain Bruce Ricketts, commanding the six 3-inch Ordnance rifles of the 1st Pennsylvania Battery (F & G Consolidated), was ordered up into position. Brigadier General Adelbert Ames, acting commander of the 1st Division of the 11th Corps, noticed Ricketts' guns arriving "in very beautiful order, and [coming] up the road as if moving onto a parade ground," and inquired of Wainwright what Regular battery it was. This compliment, when later relayed by Wainwright, "tickled Ricketts greatly."[58]

One thing that did not "tickle Ricketts," and indeed, became quite a sore spot with him twenty years after the fact, was the precise *time* at which his battery relieved

Capt. Bruce Ricketts, commanding F&G, 1st Pennsylvania Battery. Gil Barrett collection, USAMHI.

Cooper's. Returning to the field in 1883, Ricketts encountered a small marker to Cooper's unit, placed there some time earlier. Noting the marker's claim that Battery B held its position from 4 P.M. until 7 P.M., during the bulk of the bombardment, Ricketts was incensed. Writing to historian Colonel John B. Bachelder to protest, he insisted, "Now the fact is My Batty.(sic) relieved Cooper's at 4 P. M. as no doubt you know, & as from 4 to 7 P. M. were three very important hours, it seems to me the statement ought to be corrected." This notice prompted a great deal of debate among some of the survivors of both batteries, who feuded on it for some time. Ricketts, himself a prolific letter-writer, pressed the issue interminably. There is some evidence, however, that Cooper's guns remained in position for the bulk of the bombardment.[59]

Irrespective of "the great debate" over the time of Ricketts' appearance on the hillside, the arrival of the battery was both evidence of Federal strength, and a reminder of the grisly work that had gone before. As they were going into position, one of Ricketts' gunners noticed the severed hand of one of Cooper's cannoneers (likely that of Private McCleary) and buried it in one of the lunettes. As if to underscore the value of this terrain, Col. Wainwright arrived shortly after the battery appeared on the crest, instructing Ricketts, "Captain, this is the key to our position on Cemetery Hill, and must be held; in case you are charged, here you will not limber up under any circumstances, but fight it out as long as you can."[60]

Within the boundaries of the Evergreen Cemetery itself, even the dead were not immune to the effects of the fighting. Lieutenant George Breck observed the how the cannonade had affected the previously attractive surroundings:

> …a beautiful cemetery it was, but now how trodden down, laid a waste, desecrated. The fences are all down, the many graves have been run over, beautiful lots with iron fences and splendid monuments have been destroyed or soiled…[61]

One of the "splendid monuments" thus destroyed was the headstone of Sergeant Frederick Huber of the 23rd Pennsylvania Infantry. Laid to rest in a then-quiet hillside a year earlier following his mortal wounding at the Battle of Fair Oaks, his rest, like his monument, was shattered by the flying artillery projectiles. The stone, in its broken condition, remains to this day as a visible reminder of Lt. Breck's lament.

Unlike Sgt. Huber, live soldiers usually had more to fear from incoming artillery rounds. Traditionally, these were provided by guns of the enemy. Occasionally, however, "friendly fire" episodes did occur. During the course of the shelling, politician-turned-general James Wadsworth, commanding the 1st Division of the 1st Corps had sent over a message, requesting that artillery fire be directed toward a section of woods about Culp's Hill, to strike the enemy he believed to be there. Wainwright, concerned about striking Federal soldiers, was hesitant. Soon General Wadsworth appeared in person, determined to have his shelling. Col. Wainwright, "not wishing to be ugly," detailed a single gun from Battery I, 1st New York Artillery for this purpose. He further insisted that the general personally aim the piece. When the first shot was fired, Wadsworth "galloped off, quite happy." The firing continued, but at a very slow pace, as Col. Wainwright "could not believe" that an error was not being committed. By the sixth shot, a major from the 12th Corps appeared, confirming that one was, and announcing that every shot was striking the Union line. The Federal shells had wounded half a dozen men. Col. Wainwright ceased the firing.[62]

The actual amount of devastation inflicted by the Federal batteries upon the Confederate guns gathered on Benner's Hill is the subject of debate. Certainly, to be forced to stand in the open, upon lower ground, and attempt to hold that ground in the face of rapid, precise shelling from multiple directions would rattle any troops. In many cases, the comparatively short ranges involved, in concert with accurate Federal fire, denied the Confederates the opportunity to fully utilize what resources they possessed. The end result of this phase of the battle proved that the

Confederates had felt themselves forced to do too much with too little. Six of the fourteen guns deployed below the Hanover road were smoothbores – not the ideal piece for counterbattery fire, in competition with the more accurate rifles throwing shells equipped with percussion fuses. Certainly, with the exception of the six Napoleons of the 5th Maine, and the two comprising Lt. Van Reed's section of Battery K, 5th U. S., the remaining guns that had been trained on Latimer's position had been rifles. Their additional accuracy was surely a factor in the ultimate disruption of Latimer's battalion as an effective fighting force.

General Hunt, a Regular artillerist, had early on appreciated with a trained eye the "decided advantage" that Cemetery Hill presented as a gun mount. A notably efficient officer, he had restored the necessary balance of fluidity and firepower to the Union artillery prior to Gettysburg, making changes that improved the arm's efficiency both on the march and in the field. Later, he had occasion to reflect on a lost opportunity that resulted from the exchange. A firm believer in the principle of concentrated firepower, he witnessed with satisfaction the evident discomfiture of the Confederate guns on the opposite hill. Being a perfectionist sort, however, he reluctantly recorded,

> … [W]e had cause to regret that that our 4 ½ inch guns had been left at Westminster, as the position offered great advantages for them.[63]

Even without the larger rifles, however, the inflicted damages had proved sufficient. One Southerner, perhaps with some dramatization, described the impact of the Federal gunnery in these terms:

> Never, before or after, did I see fifteen or twenty guns in such a condition of wreck and destruction as this battalion was. It had been hurled back, as it were, by the very weight and impact of metal from the position it had occupied on the crest of the little ridge, into a saucer-shaped depression behind it; and such a scene as it presented – guns dismounted and disabled, carriages splintered and crushed, ammunition chests exploded, limbers upset, wounded horses plunging and kicking, dashing out the brains of men tangled in the harness; while cannoneers with pistols were crawling around through the wreck shooting the struggling horses to save the lives of the wounded men.[64]

Toward dusk, Major Latimer sensed all that could be done had been. He therefore reported to General Johnson the futility of exposing the battalion to further shelling, and advised him of the terrible condition of his horses and men. Johnson directed him to cease fire, and withdraw all but four pieces, which were left under cover in case of a Federal advance. Shortly afterward, as he remained with those four guns, Major Latimer received the serious wound that would eventuate in his death from gangrene on August 1, following his return to Virginia. While the loss of Major Latimer seemingly capped a truly terrible afternoon for the cannoneers of the battalion, Lt. Col. Andrews later attempted to downplay the results of the afternoon's engagement. In his final report, written on August 5, Andrews stated his belief that "we did the enemy infinitely more damage than we sustained, for they had to change their positions frequently" while the Confederate guns "stood unflinchingly." He also cited as evidence the appearance of Rickett's battery to relieve Cooper's late in the bombardment as weakness of the Federal gun line. [65]

Tactically, the failure of General Johnson's infantry to promptly advance as the bombardment opened led to the sacrificial display on Benner's Hill. While counter-firing artillery is the ideal "red herring" during an infantry advance, designed to draw fire away from vulnerable infantry in the open, the Confederate guns, with no other targetable distractions nearby, were caught in a "Hell Infernal" on the open hill. Belatedly, "as the sun had disappeared behind the horizon," and the fire of the Federal batteries was concentrated on the remnants of Latimer's command, Major

Richardson, posted on Seminary Ridge, opened on Cemetery Hill, where, in the words of Col. Garnett, Major Richardson, "with his nine rifles, succeed[ed] in diverting their fire," though the accuracy of this claim is dubious. Were it true, it should have been noticed by at least one of the three senior artillerists against whose commands such a diversionary fire was intended. Yet Hunt, Wainwright, and Osborn all failed to report any noticeable firing from Seminary Ridge; there was certainly nothing heavy enough to have distracted the Federal gunners from their mission.[66]

Only belatedly, around 8 P.M., did the two brigades of Confederate infantry, those of Brigadier General Harry T. Hays and Colonel Robert F. Hoke, begin their advance against the heights. Under the overall command of General Hays, Hoke's brigade had recently seen a temporary change in commanders, as Col. Hoke himself had been wounded at Chancellorsville. His three Tarheel units, the 57th, 21st, and 6th North Carolina, were now commanded by Colonel Isaac E. Avery. By design a great wheeling motion, the troops of Hoke's brigade of North Carolinians would have the furthest to advance against East Cemetery Hill in the coming attack. On the right of Hoke's units, and therefore closer to the town, were the 5th, 6th, 7th, 8th, and 9th Louisiana regiments, comprising Hays' command. These units extended back along Winebrenner's Run, near the northern base of Cemetery Hill.

As the Southern infantry began to advance toward the ridgeline, failures of proper coordination began to unravel the plans of the attackers. Major General Jubal A. Early, commanding the division containing Hays' and Hoke's brigades, had been informed that the scope of the attack against the hills was general, comprising not only his own division, but also Robert Rodes' and A.P. Hill's to his right, in addition to Johnson's division further south. Sadly for the Confederates, this was not to be. With no immediate threat posed to the hills save the two brigades facing them from the east, the concentrated fire of the Federal artillerists once again began to focus upon the Confederates. General Hays recalled:

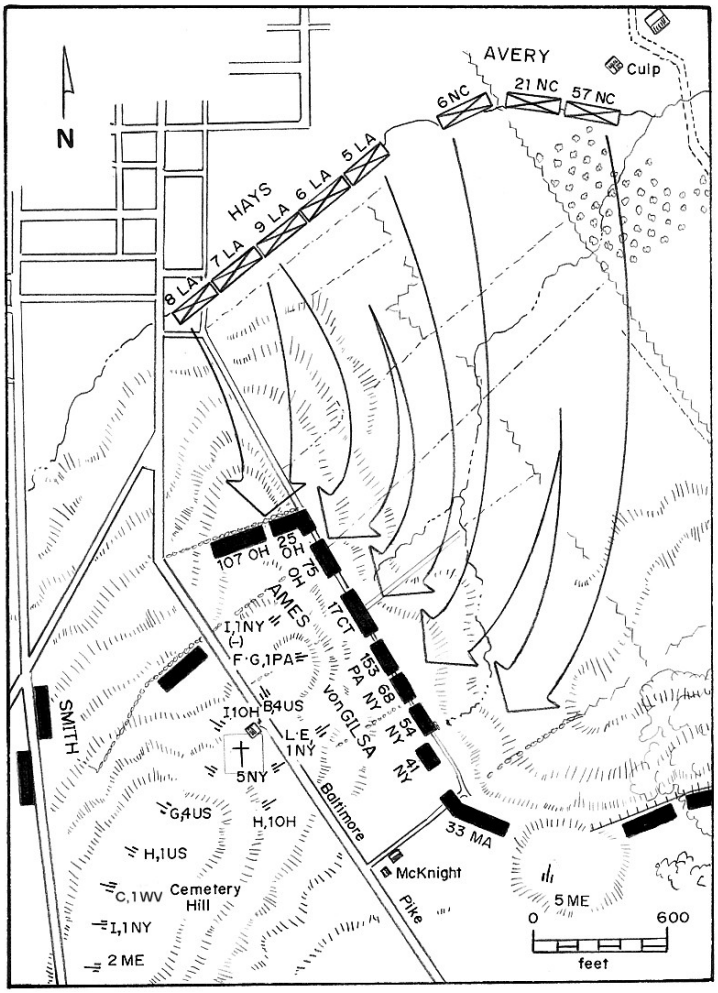
> I immediately moved forward, and had gone but a short distance when my whole line became exposed to a most terrific fire from the enemy's batteries from the entire range of hills in front, and to the right and left; still, both brigades advanced steadily…[67]

No doubt many of the more precise "welcoming shots" came from the cooled-down and cleaned-out bores of Lt. Whittier's Napoleons, all six of which were now in an excellent position to deliver a raking fire against the Confederates. Whittier later described the opening moments of their fire, neatly choreographing the scene:

> All comrades of the old Fifth know how quickly and how well our guns opened the artillery fire that evening, for the order, 'Case, 2 1-2 degrees, 3 seconds time,' had hardly been heard before up went the lids of the limber-chests, the fuses were cut in another moment, and the guns were loaded as if on drill. Slap went the heads of the rammers against the faces of the pieces, a most welcome sound, for at that moment came the order 'Fire by battery' and at once there was the flash and roar of our six guns, the rush of projectiles, and along the enemy's charging line every case shot – 'long range canister' – burst as if on measured ground, at the right time and in the right place above and in front of their advance.[68]

The "flash and roar of our six guns" surprised more than the Confederates. Col. Adin B. Underwood, commanding the 33rd Massachusetts Infantry, had recently posted his unit behind the stone wall roughly one hundred yards or so from the battery, and was completely unaware of its presence in the gathering dusk. Focusing on the advancing Confederates before them, the infantrymen were no doubt rattled by what Col. Underwood recorded as "a flash of light, a roar and a crash as if a volcano had been let loose" suddenly erupted nearby.[69]

With the exception of the exchanging of Cooper's guns for Ricketts', the Federal artillery line remained much as it had throughout the late afternoon. However, the terrain was now of critical import, as the targets were no longer distant and static. East Cemetery Hill and the eastern crest of Cemetery Hill itself had proven marvelous platforms for long-range shelling, but as the Confederate infantry advanced, the bulk of the batteries, perched as they were on the steep heights, were denied the *effective* use of their most fearsome anti-personnel tool – point-blank fire. Normally the most awesome portion of an artilleryman's arsenal, and therefore reserved for an enemy's final approach, his canister rounds could not now be successfully employed, given the sharp face of the hill. The terrain did level off in some measure toward the front of Breck's New York battery, but the presence of General Francis Barlow's Union infantry division, posted in front of the guns at the base of the hill, prevented the use of canister there.[70]



The assault of Hays' and Avery's brigades upon Cemetery Hill.

Approaching the hill, Gen. Hays reported meeting "a considerable body" of Federals, and a vigorous firing ensued. Major Allen G. Brady, commanding the 17th Connecticut Infantry, commented on the fighting at that point, noting that their repeated "volleys by battalion" thinned the ranks of the approaching Confederates.[71]

These same infantry forces, which included more elements of the wounded Barlow's infantry, now commanded by Brigadier General Adelbert Ames, and the terrain previously mentioned, precluded a more active role for the Union guns at this stage. The only full exception to this was in the case of the 5th Maine Battery, which, posted on the flank, faced no such impediments. The battery engaged the exposed left flank of Avery's brigade. Col. Archibald C. Godwin, the commander of the 57th North Carolina Infantry and later of Hoke's brigade, recalled that during this section of the advance:

> *It was discovered that the batteries which we had been ordered to take were in front of Hays' brigade, and considerably to the right of our right flank.* We continued to advance, however, under a terrific fire, climbed a rail fence, and still further beyond descended into a low bottom, and dislodged a heavy line of infantry from a stone wall running parallel with our front. *The enemy's batteries now enfiladed us,* and a destructive fire was poured into our ranks from a line of infantry (emphasis added)…[72]

However, as Gen. Hays reported, his troops could have fared far worse on the advance:

> …but owing to the darkness of the evening, now verging into night, and the deep obscurity afforded by the smoke of the firing, our exact locality could not be discovered by the enemy's gunners, and we thus escaped what in the full light of day could have been nothing less than horrible slaughter.[73]

First Lieutenant Charles B. Brockway of Ricketts' battery described the scene as the attacking Confederates began to close in on the Union position:

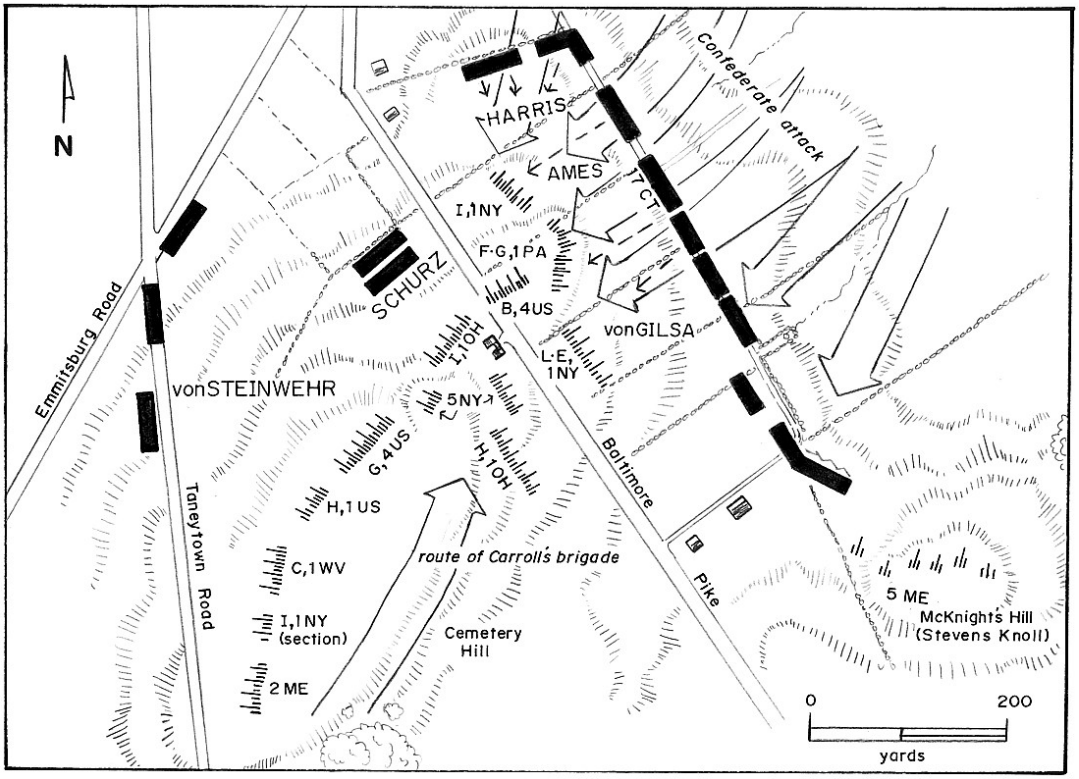
Lt. Charles B. Brockway, F&G, 1st Pennsylvania Battery. Dave Richards collection, USAMHI

> At their first appearance we threw in their midst shrapnell and solid shot; but when they charged we used single and double rounds of canister. The infantry in our front – 1st Div. 11th Corps – at the first volley left their position behind the stone wall in our front, and sought safety in flight. All efforts to rally them were unsuccessful.[74]

Brockway's statement is not totally fair, and neither is his further commentary that Capt. Wiedrich's battery, on his left, "*retired*" (emphasis in original) as if it were an *optional* movement. The Confederate soldiers presented themselves with dogged ferocity, met by an equal determination to resist on the part of the gunners. At Wiedrich's battery, Hays' Louisianans swarmed around the guns. One of them, throwing himself across the muzzle of a piece, proclaimed, "I take command of this gun!" In response, a cannoneer holding the lanyard replied "Du sollst sie haben!" (Then you must be promoted /"raised up") while yanking the rope, thus blowing the Confederate to bits.[75]

Brockway claimed that, given the terrain, Breck's Battery E, 1st New York "owing to its position in a hollow could only fire to the front," while the guns of the 5th Maine, given the curve of the hill, could not reach the Confederate infantry attacking on the northern end of the line. He asserted, therefore, that his battery bore the brunt of the attack *alone* (emphasis in

original). During the assault, Battery E's entire remaining issue of canister was expended, and the men resorted to using "rotten shot," or shell without the fuses, bursting at the muzzle of the guns. As the Tigers began to fight their way among the guns, cannoneers responded with pistols, rammers, rocks, and handspikes, endeavoring to hold their pieces. The artillerists' determination to "Die on the soil of your State but don't give up your guns" was visibly evident.



The Confederate assault crests upon the summit of East Cemetery Hill and is counterattacked by Carroll's brigade from the Union 2nd Corps.

In support of their stand against the charging Confederates, elements of General Adolph Von Steinwehr's division of the 11th Corps and a few individual regiments from Gen. Ames' broken infantry line advanced toward the besieged artillerists. As these men tangled with the Confederates, the troops of Colonel Samuel S. Carroll's 1st Brigade from Brigadier General Alexander Hays' 3rd Division of the 2nd Corps (save the 8th Ohio, in reserve) advanced in column over the crest of the ridge. Halting briefly to permit Ricketts' gunners to fire into the Confederates, these fresh Federals inspired the embattled batterymen as they closed the distance with the foe. As the first of Carroll's infantry arrived, one of the gunners announced, "Glory to God! We are saved!"[76]

Indeed it seemed so. Confederate General Hays, who later recorded, "A quiet of several minutes now ensued," realized that the fresh battle noises he heard were not those of supporting Southern troops. Fully alive to his exposed and dangerous position, Hays ultimately "concluded that [any assistance] would be too late, and my only course would be to withdraw my command." The fight now shifted to a purely infantry repulse of an infantry attack, as Carroll's men swept forward, driving the men of Hays' and Avery's commands back down the slope and away from the crest of the hill. The artillery line was once again secure – for the moment.[77]

Over the course of time, the success of Carroll's brigade in stabilizing the hill, along with the endurance of Ricketts' gunners against their Confederate attackers, has assumed the status of

semi-legend; a part of the presumed inevitability inherent in the script of the Battle of Gettysburg and the ownership of the hills. However, the Federal victory had been a near-run thing.

The Union possession of Cemetery Hill at the close of battle on July 1 provided the Army of the Potomac with certain advantages that ultimately assisted in the achievement of final victory at Gettysburg. It is true that the heights granted an unquestioned advantage as far as elevation above the Confederates. However, the relatively narrow and elongated nature of the ground initially concerned Federal commanders, as General Hancock noted on July 1:

> We have now taken up a position in the cemetery, and cannot well be taken. It *is a position, however, easily turned* [emphasis added].[78]

Throughout the course of the fighting on July 2, instances occurred that demonstrated both the strengths and the weaknesses of the position. During that afternoon, the topography of the hills allowed the superior Union artillery to maximize its advantages against a Confederate cannonade cursed with both inferior materiel and position, though the Confederates did endeavor to develop an effective cross-fire plan against the batteries on the hills. Yet, true to Hancock's concern, the position proved potentially vulnerable to infantry assault near its "pivot point," and was only fully sustained because the attackers were not able to fully utilize their resources. Had the Confederate attack been carried forth as envisioned, with Gen. Gordon's brigade on Hays' right linking to General Robert Rodes' division, thus providing a coordinated attack against the western face of the slope as well, the results might have been different. Simultaneous infantry pressure against both sides of that relatively narrow Federal salient would have presented problems for the Union forces, as General Early's commentary highlighted:

> But no attack was made on the immediate right, as was expected, and not meeting with support from that quarter, these brigades could not hold the position they had they had attained, because a very heavy force of the enemy was turned against them.[79]

Precisely this argument was made by Major Samuel McDaniel Tate, commanding the 6th North Carolina Infantry regiment of Hoke's brigade, who claimed that his men entered and planted flags among the works. In an emotional correspondence drafted directly to North Carolina Governor Zebulon Vance on July 8, Tate recounted escaping the Federal repulse, and then attempting to determine where the attack had broken down:

> On arriving at our lines, I demanded to know why we had not been supported, and was coolly told that *it was not known that we were in the works* (emphasis added).

Tate went on to speculate on what might have transpired had the attack been reinforced. In his opinion, "[I]f support of a brigade had been sent to us the slaughter of A.P Hill's corps would have been saved the day following." In frustration, Tate also predicted "I have no doubt that that the major-general [Early] will report the …works" which Hoke's and Hays' brigades attacked "could not be taken."[80]

Had the Confederates been able to overcome these organizational difficulties, the Federal problem on the crest of Cemetery Hill on the evening of July 2 would have been much more complex, and the presumed aura of inevitability thus granted to the position much less assured. In a way, Cemetery Hill was not unlike the Confederate position of Missionary Ridge in Tennessee, where the nature of the topography crowned with artillery also gave a deceptive impression of strength. Confederate General Braxton Bragg, whose infantry and artillery were ultimately forced from that position, observed in his post-Missionary Ridge report:

> Though greatly outnumbered, *such was the strength of our position that no doubt was entertained of our ability to hold it* (emphasis added), and every disposition was made for that purpose.

Bragg further stated "nearly all the artillery having been shamefully abandoned by its infantry support," and noted the losses of approximately forty pieces of artillery, a very high percentage. Confederate battery commanders there commented on the inability to depress their guns to address the Union infantry as it approached their positions on the steep slopes.[81]

What took place in November of 1863 at Missionary Ridge *might* have happened on Cemetery Hill – and almost did. But it did not. However, the fact remains that during the evening of July 2, the Confederate infantry *did* penetrate the batteries on East Cemetery Hill, albeit briefly. With the lingering impression of this memory, the costly Confederate victory earlier that day against the flawed Federal artillery position at the Peach Orchard was combined, and a fatal mistake was nurtured, prompting one more tragic advance on July 3 – one that helped to etch forever the image of Cemetery Hill as an inevitable artillery platform.

Gatehouse to the Evergreen Cemetery on July 15, 1863. Baltimore Pike in the foreground. LC

Notes

[1]Eric Campbell, *Cultural Landscape Report*, pp. 12, 18-19; U. S. War Department, *The War of the Rebellion: A Compilation of the Official Records of the Union and Confederate Armies* (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1889), Series 1, 27(1): 702 [Hereafter cited as *OR*].
[2] James Power Smith, *General Lee at Gettysburg* (Boston: Military Historical Society of Massachusetts, 1906), V:390
[3] *OR*, Series 1, 27(1):366.
[4] *OR*, Series 1, 27(I):354-365; *OR*, Series 1, 27(1):747-758; *OR*, Series 1, 27(1):361. Col. Wainwright, in his diary (see Allen Nevins, ed. *A Diary of Battle: The Personal Journals of Charles S. Wainwright*, (New York: Da Capo Press, 1998), 238), also claims to have posted the guns. However, Captain Greenleaf T. Stevens claims, in the section of the account of "At the Battle of Gettysburg," authored with Edward N. Whittier in *Maine at Gettysburg* (Portland: The Lakeside Press, 1898), 89, to have been posted by General Hancock.
[5] Ezra J. Warner, *Generals in Blue: Lives of the Union Commanders* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1977), 242; *OR*, Series 1, 25(1):252- 253; *OR*, Series 1, 27(1):242- 243.
[6] Stewart Sifkas, *Who Was Who in the Union* (New York: Facts On File, 1988), 433.
[7] Nevins, 7.
[8] Sifkas, 433; Nevins, 55.
[9] New York Monuments Commission, *New York at Gettysburg* (Albany: J. B. Lyon Company, Printers, 1902), 3:1194, 1203.
[10] Herb S. Crumb and Katherine Dhalle, eds., *No Middle Ground*: *Thomas Ward Osborn's Letters from the Field* (Hamilton: Edmonston, 1993), 143.
[11]New York Monuments Commission, 3:1247; David L. and Audrey Ladd, eds., *The Bachelder Papers: Gettysburg in Their Own Words* (Dayton, Ohio: Morningside Press, 1994), 2:1182; *OR*, Series 1, 27(2):484.
[12] Nevins, 238; *OR*, Series 1, 27(1):748-749, 231-232.
[13] *OR*, Series 1, 27(1):755; Ladd and Ladd, eds., 1:388.
[14] *OR*, Series 1, 27(1):747-748.
[15] See *OR*, Series 1, 27(1):354-365; John P. Nicholson, ed., *Pennsylvania at Gettysburg – Ceremonies at the Dedication of the Monuments* (Harrisburg: Wm. Stanley Ray, State Printer, 1914), 2:909. Here we have an early example of the confusion regarding gun positions that dogs the historical record. In an article written in 1893 by James Stewart for *Sketches of War History*, 1861-1865, for the Ohio Commandery of the Military Order of the Loyal Legion of the United States, (vol. IV, pp. 189-190), the former commander of Battery B, 4th U.S., Battery B recalled he was ordered "to place three guns on [the] pike and the other at right-angles to them." He further stated, "I remained in that position from the afternoon of the 1st to the forenoon of the 4th,…" This conflicts with Col. Wainwright's official report, which specifically states (*OR*, Series 1, 27(1):357, that "Four guns of Battery B, Fourth U. S. Artillery, [were placed] across the road so as to command the approaches from the town…" This is also in partial conflict with the description given by Col. Bruce Ricketts, as found on p. 931 of *Pennsylvania at Gettysburg*. Col. Ricketts remembers a section (two guns) of Stewart's facing town, and the other two "in rear of the two right guns of my battery facing to our front." It is possible a time confusion is involved here, yet Stewart did not comment on shifting any guns. It is perhaps likely that an additional piece was shifted during the evening, to help repulse the Confederate infantry attack.
[16] Nevins, 240-242.
[17] Ibid., 242.
[18] *OR*, Series 1, 27(1):748.
[19] Phil Cole, *Civil War Artillery at Gettysburg: Organization, Equipment, Ammunition and Tactics* (New York: Da Capo Press, 2002), 64; *OR*, Series 1, 27(1):167; Bill Hyde, ed., *The Union Generals Speak*: *The Meade Hearings on the Battle of Gettysburg* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State Press, 2003), 311, 305.
[20] Ibid., 303; Warner, 515; Sifkas, 420.
[21] *OR*, Series 1, 27(1):749. Identifying the precise number of guns assigned to the "Baltimore Pike Line" is a statistician's nightmare, as the facts seemingly are always changing. For example, in Maj. Osborn's official report, he describes placing *three* batteries to the right of the Baltimore road with an eye to commanding the ravine, yet in his account in the May 31, 1879 issue of the *Philadelphia Weekly Times*, he

recalled taking *two* batteries. In a further article, written "probably about 1880," reprinted in Herb S. Crumb and Katherine Dhalle, eds., *The Eleventh Corps Artillery at Gettysburg*: *The Papers of Thomas Ward Osborn* (Hamilton: Edmonston, 1991), Osborn again recalled withdrawing two batteries, totaling ten guns, (p.22) for this purpose. Other sources fluctuate as well. Adding guns from Captain Robert Fitzhugh's 4th Volunteer Reserve Brigade and Lt. Edward Muhlenberg's 12th Corps Artillery brigade eventually swelled this number to some 46 to 49 pieces. Precise numerical reconciliation, however, grows more difficult when one considers that many of the units called to cover the gorge in the morning hours of July 2 were later shifted to other locations without having fired a shot from their earlier positions. Some batteries, therefore, are omitted from totals containing otherwise "complete" listings, and thus differences emerge. There were 413 guns in the Federal artillery at Chancellorsville.

[22] *OR*, Series 1, 27(1):232-3; 872, 896.

[23] *OR*, Series 1, 27(1):478.

[24] Janet B. Hewett, Noah Andre Trudeau, Bryce A Suderow, eds., *Supplement to the Official Records of the Union and Confederate Armies* (Wilmington: Broadfoot, 1995), Series 5, 5(1):225.

[25] James F. Huntington, "Notes of Service With (sic) A Light Artillery at Chancellorsville and Gettysburg," *Marietta Sunday Observer*, August 4, 1918, GNMPL. There seems to be a general consensus, based on the collective reports from the batteries in Captain Huntington's 3rd Reserve Brigade, that the men reached the area of the artillery park, located between the Baltimore pike and the Taneytown road, along present-day Granite Schoolhouse Lane, between 12 and 1 P.M. on the afternoon of July 2. One of Huntington's batteries, Rickett's C and F of the 1st PA, would be separated to see service under Col. Wainwright on East Cemetery Hill later that day.

[26] *OR,* Series 1, 27(2):351.

[27] *OR,* Series 1, 27(2):675.

[28] Lt. Col. George R. Large, *The Official History by the Gettysburg National Military Park Commission* (Shippensburg, 1999), 250; Jennings C. Wise, *The Long Arm of Lee - The History of the Artillery of the Army of Northern Virginia* (New York, 1959), 651-652; *OR*, Series 1, 27(2):652. As usual, there is a slight discrepancy in accounting for the total number of guns – Wise in *Long Arm* states that the entire complement of Ross's battery was employed, while Large notes (and practicality, mathematics, and tactics endorse the idea) that the 12-pound howitzer was in fact reassigned to another unit that morning.

[29] *OR,* Series 1, 27(1):749.

[30] One of the great mysteries of Confederate artillery concerns its failure to properly organize guns at the battery level. In a proposed reorganization of artillery, dated February 11, 1863, William Pendleton stated, "Batteries, it is recommended, should be rendered homogeneous in armament as soon as practicable by interchange of guns with other batteries." However, by May 30, he seemed willing to "let [the issue] remain [rather] than to create other difficulties (?) by enforcing an equalization." He further wrote he had no objections to shifting guns, *if the commanding general deems it best* (emphasis added), but personally could no longer recommend it, lest it "produce regrets and dissatisfaction, which, in a case like ours, requiring the whole hearts of men, it does not seem to me wise to excite." Evidently, the tactical efficiency of the arm was sacrificed to the political objections raised by a few. See *OR*, Series 1, 25 (2):614-618,838; *OR,* Series 1, 27 (2):652.

[31] *OR*, Series 1, 27(2):604, 652.

[32] 55th Ohio folder, GNMPL; Ohio Historical Center. GNMP folder, 136th NY; Theodore A. Dodge, "Left Wounded on the Field," *Putnam's Magazine* (September, 1869), 321.

[33] Edward Porter Alexander, "The Great Charge And Artillery Fighting At Gettysburg," in Robert U. Johnson and Clarence Buel, eds., *Battles and Leaders of the Civil War*, 4 vols. (New York: Century Co. 1884-1889), 3:358.

[34] *OR*, Series 1, 27(1):754. In his *OR* report, Capt. Dilger refers to "having lost…one piece disabled." during his fight of July 1. There is no mention of it being refit or returned to service. Thus I count five, not six, guns in his line on July 2; *OR*, Series 1, 27(1):892, 749, 756.

[35] *OR,* Series 1, 27(1):749.

[36] According to Robert P. Parrott's *Ranges of Parrott Guns and Notes For Practice* (New York: D. Van Nostrand, 1863, p.12), a shell may at 5 degrees' elevation reach 2,100 yards; if the gun be at 10 degrees a shell may reach 3,350 yards; Large, 233.

[37] Douglas Southall Freeman, *Lee's Lieutenants: A Study In Command* (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons 1946), 3:102-105.

[38] Wise, 653-654, 608.
[39] Large, 262-265, 254. A number of the various unit markers indicate that the 20-pound Parrott grouping was placed anywhere between 200 yards to a half-mile north of the Hanover road. See p. 263.
[40] Memoir of John William Ford Hatton, (p. 451), Maryland Artillery folder (7MD Art), GNMPL.
[41]Nevins, 242; *OR,* Series 1, 27(1):870-871.
[42] Nevins, 242.
[43] Crumb and Dhalle, eds., 25-26; Whittier, 91-92; New York Monuments Commission, (3):1247.
[44] Nevins, 242, 244.
[45] Paul Shevchuk, "The Wounding of Albert Jenkins, July 2, 1863," *Gettysburg Magazine*, Issue No. 3, July, 1990, p. 63.
[46]James Stewart, "Battery B United States Artillery At Gettysburg.", in W. H. Chamberlin, ed., *Sketches of War History, 1861-1865*, *Papers Read Before the Ohio Commandry of the Military Order of the Loyal Legion of the United States* (Wilmington, NC: Broadfoot Publishing, 1991), 4:190.
[47]Nevins, 242.
[48] Letter of Lt. Edward R. Geary to his mother, July 17, 1863; GNMPL folder (6-PA1-ART-E).
[49] Ibid. Note here the young Lieutenant's humility in claiming to have inflicted *all* the damage himself.
[50] *OR,* Series 1, 27(1):233.
[51] Harry W. Pfanz, *Gettysburg – Culp's Hill and Cemetery Hill* (Chapel Hill: Univ. of North Carolina Press, 1993), 184-185.
[52] Memoir of John William Ford Hatton, (p. 452), Maryland Artillery folder (7MD Art), GNMPL.
[53] Ibid., 453-454.
[54] Ibid., 453.
[55] Samuel P. Bates, *History of Pennsylvania Volunteers, 1861-1865;* (Wilmington: Broadfoot Publishing, 1993), 2:950.
[56] Nevins, 243. From closer research, it now seems that the man indicated in Col. Wainwright's memoirs as James Mcleary's "brother" appears have been someone else. McCleary had no brother in the unit. Sergeant James P. Alcorn's brother, Alexander, however, had been wounded on July 1. See Frank J. Piatek, "Col. Charles Wainwright's Account of Cooper's Company B, 1st Pennsylvania Light Artillery on East Cemetery Hill: A Case of Mistaken Identity?" *Gettysburg Magazine*, Issue No. 36, 2007, pp. 95-102; Nicholson, ed., 2:911.
[57] Whittier, 93. There are two views of the Chase story. Neither minimizes his injuries, but there is a potential difference as to how they came to be. As recounted in *Notes from The Chase Chronicles*, a family newsletter, "…a Confederate shrapnel shell"… *"burst within about four feet* (emphasis added) of [5th Maine Private John F.] Chase, tearing off his right arm, putting out his left eye, piercing his lungs and breaking several ribs." Presumed dead for two days, and left to die for three more, his first words had been, "Did we win the battle?" Pvt. Chase lived until 1915. He was said to have received more wounds than any other soldier that lived. (*Notes from The Chase Chronicles, January, 1911*) http://www.webnests.com/Chase/chronicles/johnfchase.htm. Another view, equally as plausible, but noted in detail in his pension file, indicates that the ammunition he was loading into his hot gun "cooked off" and exploded unexpectedly. See Charlie Fennell, "*Benner's Hill Was Simply A Hell Infernal*" – Ewell's Demonstration, July 2, 1863," in *Blue & Gray Magazine*, vol. XXI, issue 1, p.12.
[58] Nevins, 245.
[59] Robert Bruce Ricketts to Col. John B. Bachelder, October 26, 1883. See Ricketts' Battery File, 6-PA-1-ART-F, in GNMPL. Three rebuttals to Ricketts' claim are Wainwright's statement in Nevins, 245, noting "About sundown Captain Ricketts reported with his battery…" Additionally, a statement in Nicholson, ed., 2:912 by Lt. James A. Gardner of Cooper's Battery, in which he cites ammunition expenditure rates as a time determinant appears solid. This is further cross-buttressed by the statement of Lt. Whittier of the 5th Maine, quoted at Note 56 in the text. Notice in Whittier's list of active units the absence of "Ricketts' Battery" in the line mentioned, thus supporting the argument that the guns of Cooper's battery remained in position through the longer period of the late afternoon/early evening. Finally, it is worth noting that Ricketts' own report, written on August, 30, 1863, says nothing about relieving any battery. *OR,* Series 1, 27(1):894.
[60] Fennell, 12; Nevins, 245.
[61] George Breck, Letter to Ellen, July 2, 1863, Reynolds' Battery File, GNMPL.

[62] Nevins, 244-245. Disagreements between Wainwright and Wadsworth had surfaced previously, notably on July 1, and would do so again.
[63] *OR*, Series 1, 27(1):233. The batteries referred to are the other two batteries of the 2nd Volunteer Brigade, batteries B and M of the 1st Connecticut Heavy Artillery. Hunt's opinion was that he was seconded by Gen. Tyler, who reported "I am satisfied that the action of Gettysburg would have demonstrated their extreme mobility and usefulness…" (*OR*, Series 1, vol. 27(1):872.) In fact, there are eight of these guns on the field – they serve as the Union corps markers.
[64] Robert Stiles, *Four Years under Marse Robert* (New York: Pelican Publishing Co., 1903), 34.
[65] *OR,* Series 1, 27(2):504, 456, 544.
[66] W. W. Goldsborough, *The Maryland Line In the Confederate Army, 1861-1865* (Gaithersburg, Maryland: Butternut and Blue, 1987), 324; *OR*, Series 1, 27(2):652.
[67] *OR,* Series 1, 27(2):470, 480.
[68] Whittier, 95.
[69] Ibid.
[70] *OR*, Series 1, 27(1):363.
[71] *OR*, Series 1, 27(1):718.
[72] *OR*, Series 1, 27(2): 484.
[73] *OR*, Series 1, 27(2): 480.
[74] Letter of Lt. Charles Brockway to D. Conaughy, March 5, 1864. Ricketts' Battery file, GNMPL.
[75] Pfanz, 269.
[76] Pfanz, 273.
[77] *OR*, Series 1, 27(2):480-481.
[78] *OR*, Series 1, 27(1):366.
[79] *OR*, Series 1, 27(2):470.
[80] *OR*, Series 1, 27(2):487, 486. Gen. Early's report was filed on August 22, 1863. In it, Early only observed that without support, the Confederates could not "hold the position *they had attained*" (emphasis added). *OR*, Series 1, 27(2):470.
[81] *OR,* Series 1, 31(2):664-665, 640, 728. Captain Max Van Den Corput, of the Cherokee Artillery, reported "I fired 33 shells, doing in many instances good execution. The Federals were, however, soon under cover of the rocks, *being unable to depress my guns enough*" (emphasis added).